

VZCZCXRO4891
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHKI #0046/01 0171219
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 171219Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7377
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000046

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: MONUC's Kivus Conference Report -
Sitrep #7 (January 12, 2007)

REF: Kinshasa 0040

Note: The following report was prepared by MONUC (pls protect) and was shared with U.S. team in Goma. Reftel is the previous installment in this series. End note.

BEGIN MONUC REPORT

1. (SBU) Summary: The ethnic communities of South Kivu commence their presentations in the fourth Plenary session. Tension rises swiftly when the Bembe and the Fulero issue anachronistic anti-Tutsi declarations, and the Banyamulenge demand the recognition of the Minembwe Territory. The Conference President proposes the intervention of the Comit des Sages, and suggests a thorough truth and reconciliation exercise to heal the unaddressed wounds provoked by waves of violence during successive wars in South Kivu.

2. (SBU) On 12 January, the speeches issued in the Plenary session by the ethnic communities of South Kivu set the tone for the forthcoming political debate on pacification in South Kivu, and revealed the root (local) causes of the 1996 and 1998 wars in the Province. From the beginning, the radical anti-Tutsi speech of the Bembe representative raised issues of indigeneity, citizenship, the contradiction between civic law and custom, conflict between herders and cultivators/gatherers, as well as tension between majoritarian and minoritarian tribes. The interventions were ideologically articulated in two categories: the majority "indigenous" tribes inhabiting the "South-South" (the Southern part of the Province), i.e. the Bembe and the Fulero, who attacked the Banyamulenge and blamed them for expansionism and subversion of the state, and demanded that they submit (as subjects) to the authority of their customary chiefs.

3. (SBU) Neglecting that the 2005 electoral registration and the post-electoral institutional order already guarantee the Banyamulenge's citizenship, both the Bembe and the Fulero quoted colonial historical sources to demonstrate that the Banyamulenge are lesser citizens than the "indigenous" Congolese. Both expressed their categorical refusal to the recognition of the Minembwe Territory that was created by the RCD-G in 1999, demanded punishment for the massacres committed during the RCD-G era, and requested that the name "Banyamulenge" be renounced (something they consider a historical manipulation) and therefore to re-instate the original terminology "Banyarwanda" (the ones coming from Rwanda), which they have been using until the 1970s. Neither of the two ever mentioned the FDLR as a source of insecurity.

4. (SBU) Comments: The tone of the two statements was racist and disruptive. It is surprising that both tribes demanded the Banyamulenge to shed an identity constructed intentionally (Mulenge is indeed a location of the Moyens Plateaux of Uvira originally

inhabited by the Pygmies) to dissociate from the Rwandan Tutsi and be accepted by the other Congolese. Such strong language could have been expected from the Bembe (whose anti-Tutsi attitude dates from the 1960s), but similar sentiments expressed by the Fulero, who live in symbiosis with the Banyamulenge and have made greater efforts to reconcile, were less predictable. End comments.

¶5. (SBU) The other set of speeches was made by smaller ethnic groups: the Babuyu, the Babwari and the Banyamulenge. The Babuyu and the Babwari denounced the abuses by the Bembe illegal militia (non-brassaged Mayi-Mayi troops), and the Bembe's tendency to militarily occupy their land and to impose their political authority. They demanded that their rights be re-established and (similarly to the Bembe and the Fulero) requested that the Bembe submitted to their legitimate customary authorities.

¶6. (SBU) Evidently the most relevant declaration issued by a minority tribe was that of the Banyamulenge, which was read by Alexis Gisaro, the son of late National Deputy Frederic Gisaro (Mobutu regime), elected by the Uvira constituency in the 1970s. In reaction to the two previous anti-Tutsi speeches, Alexis Gisaro also revisited the history of the Banyamulenge's arrival from Rwanda and Burundi, which he dated as the 16th century. He then argued that the Tutsi were politically discriminated against and targeted by systematic violence. He gave an account of the massacres and abuses which targeted the Banyamulenge, notably the Gatumba massacre (August 2004), that Alexis blamed on a Congolese commando supported by the FNL. The most controversial statement, however, was his request that the Minembwe territory be recognized. The statement immediately triggered open hostility from the majority of the participants, who booed at the speaker.

¶7. (SBU) Gisaro concluded his speech by listing the "pistes de

KINSHASA 00000046 002 OF 002

solutions" (leads in the search for solutions) for the South Kivu conflict: (a) stop ethnically targeted abuses and address issues of discrimination; (b) suspend hostilities and start dialogue (with the Insurgents); (c) repatriate the FDLR; (d) provide sufficient logistical support to the Integrated Bdes deployed in the Hauts Plateaux; (e) repatriate the refugees by establishing Tripartite accords (GoDRC - UNHCR - host country); (f) repatriate the bodies of the victims of the Gatumba massacre, and bury them with honor; (g) recognize the "Territory" of Minembwe; (h) set up post-Conference mechanisms to ensure genuine ethnic cohabitation through constant dialogue; (i) provide supplementary protection to the FARDC elements of Tutsi origin; (j) extend amnesty to the military who have been accused but as yet not tried; (k) the Bembe and the Fulero should submit to the laws of the country and respect legitimate rights, as well as stop exploiting other minority tribes.

¶8. (SBU) Comments: Gisaro's speech, though more sophisticated and better structured than the ones of the Bembe and the Fulero, was a provocative one. Most non-Tutsis delegates from South Kivu were expecting the Banyamulenge to request the recognition of Minembwe as a Territory, a demand that had triggered violent demonstration in the past in South Kivu. From sources within the Bureau, MONUC was informed that the problem will be discussed in the Grand Atelier du Sud Kivu, yet it will require the intervention of the "Comite des Sages" (Committee of Wise Men).

¶9. (SBU) In the evening of 12 January, MONUC took part in the daily meeting between the Bureau and the External Facilitators' Team. In the debrief with Fr. Malu Malu, he mentioned that the day was marked by high tension and that the groups radicalized their positions against the Banyamulenge. Fr. Malu Malu commented on the Plenary identifying few main issues: (a) All peoples of South Kivu have gone through (in different phases) a horrific cycle of violence. The psychological wounds are still unaddressed; (b) the tension existing between Fulero, Bembe, and Banyamulenge is the most serious problem in South Kivu, and must be addressed; (c) it has emerged that most delegations are composed of radicals; (d) there is a need to address the past and seek forgiveness in order to de-traumatize these communities.

¶10. (SBU) He informed that it would be the task of the Comit des

Sages to handle the matter, which is emerging as one of the biggest challenges of the whole conference (reportedly, the tone of the North Kivu declarations was more conciliatory). He further commented that the heated historical debate of the origin of the Banyamulenge was a senseless one, as the issue of nationality was already solved during the Electoral process. Concerning the issue of the Minembwe Territory recognition, he appeared dismissive, arguing that it would be difficult to create a Territory outside the framework of the Constitution. He suggested, however, that developing the Hauts Plateaux, improving governance and administration, and enhancing the rule of law (especially at the borders with Rwanda and Burundi) would be a way to reduce the tension and respond to the Banyamulenge's expectations.

END MONUC REPORT

Garvelink

Page 4 of 4